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C O N F I D E N T I A L TBILISI 001602

SIPDIS

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TAGS: PREL PREF UNGA RS GG

SUBJECT: GEORGIA SEEKS U.S. HELP IN PROMOTING UNGA IDP RESOLUTION

REF: A. TBILISI 1236

1B. TBILISI 1078

Classified By: Ambassador John F. Tefft for Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (SBU) Director of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs International Organizations Department Sergi Kapanadze told emboffs on August 25 that the EU has decided to support the draft UN General Assembly resolution entitled "Status of Internally Displaced Persons and Refugees from Abkhazia, Georgia and Tskhinvali Region/South Ossetia, Georgia." He expressed optimism that the resolution would pass, noting that the support of the full EU would itself provide more affirmative votes than were cast for last year's successful resolution (62/249 of May 2008; see ref A). Nevertheless, he said that Georgia could not assume that even the EU's backing would be sufficient to ensure passage and therefore sought U.S. assistance in securing additional support.

¶2. (C) Kapanadze reported that Georgia's mission in New York has already approached over 100 countries on the resolution. Although some have already indicated their intention, Kapanadze noted that most had still not committed to vote one way or the other. He said that the U.S. support would be particularly helpful with countries whose New York missions have already recommended support to their capitals, but have not yet heard back from capitals. Countries in this group include Australia, New Zealand, a number of the Pacific island nations, Thailand, Malaysia, Pakistan, and Bangladesh.

Another group of countries with which Georgia would especially appreciate U.S. help is Argentina, Brazil and Colombia, in order to set a precedent for other undecided South American countries. U.S. support would also be particularly helpful with India, which voted against the 2008 resolution, admittedly in response to Russian lobbying. India's New York mission told the Georgians its position would "not be the same" this year, but it did not offer any additional details. U.S. intervention might also be particularly helpful with Egypt.

¶3. (C) Beyond the above countries, Kapanadze indicated Georgia would also appreciate any help the U.S. can offer with the following list. (Notes from Kapanadze appear in parentheses.)

-- Europe: Iceland, Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Andorra, Turkey, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia.

-- Oceania: Papua New Guinea, Micronesia, Marshall Islands, Palau, Nauru, Tuvalu.

-- Asia: Singapore, Brunei, Indonesia, Afghanistan, Nepal. (Abstention from Burma would be extremely positive.)

-- Middle East: Lebanon, Israel, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Oman, United Arab Emirates, Bahrain.

-- Africa: Cameroon, Nigeria, Namibia, South Africa, Niger, Rwanda, Uganda, Kenya, Ethiopia, Somalia. (Nigeria and South Africa seem promising, but have not yet committed.
Abstention from Sudan would be important.)

-- Americas: Canada, Mexico, Uruguay, Paraguay, Peru, Chile, Belize, El Salvador, Costa Rica, Panama, Trinidad and Tobago. (Central American and Caribbean states are very important to counterbalance possible negative votes by Nicaragua and Venezuela.)

COMMENT: KEEPING THE FOCUS ON GEORGIA

¶4. (C) During his June 2009 visit to Georgia, EUR Assistant Secretary Gordon agreed with local diplomatic colleagues on the importance of maintaining the UN's focus on Georgia should UNOMIG close, thereby removing the situation in Georgia from the Security Council's regular agenda (ref B). This resolution, with its call for a Secretary General's report on the implementation of the resolution, will not only maintain the UN's formal attention to the issue, but will ensure that the ongoing plight of the hundreds of thousands of IDPs, both from the early 1990s and the 2008 conflict, is not forgotten amidst discussions of such higher profile issues as political status or the potential for renewed violence. In fact, the Secretary General's still-unissued report called for in the 2008 resolution may not appear in time for the UN General Assembly discussions, so this new resolution becomes even more important in keeping the world's attention on Georgia.

TEFFT